1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

535 centres on them. It is for them that they paint and deck themselves out.
302 At these balls the young Indian tries to appear as elegantly apparelled, as originally painted and decorated, as possible. Each day he paints himself after a different fashion, and arranges his ornaments differently. — These gentry, upon growing into older, staid, married men, no longer adorn themselves for ball parties, but only for war. — As to the Choroti girls, I have often seen them anointing their bodies with fish oil, which imparts to them an unpleasant smell. Their own opinion on this point is
[832] no doubt a very different one. To their thinking, we Europeans have an offensive cow smell. The level of elegance affected by the men is never
535 attained by the women. Still, they are, however, able to make the consoling reflection that it is, anyhow, in the first place for their sake that the lords of creation spend several hours of the day on their toilet.

»As has been said, it is in dancing that the whole interest of the young men and the young women centres. When the sun has set, then it begins. In a circle, or in a single rank, the men dance, marking the time by singing, may be: 'Tãe-a-sa-lé, tãe-a-sa-lé'. As the rhythm of the singing is slow or quick, so is the dancing. Music is a thing unknown at these
[533] dances. The chants that are sung are untranslateable refrains, which often are international, i. e., are used by many different tribes. The girls dance behind the men. Among the Choroti Indians it is the girl who takes the
[832] initiative in the matter of amatory ventures. She simply carries off with her, from the ball, any particular young man whom she may want as her lover for the night. These dances made a grand spectacle, as the moon, or a bonfire of pampas grass, shone on the gleaming bodies, I have seen as many as a hundred men form a dancing circle. At times the dance went quite slowly; at times it would go at a breakneck speed, raising clouds of dust, so that all one could see was a whirling melée of bodies and waving ostrich plumes.«

535 Of the dances of the Chaco Indians,[2] those that are obviously magical
789 are mainly performed as ceremonies of exorcism against dreaded spirits who have it in their power to cause illness or death; according to Karsten, magic dances are also resorted to in order to enhance the supply of wild, edible fruits.[3]

[1] Extract from Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 73, 75—77, and 79.
[2] Karsten (1).
[3] Karsten (4), pp. 25—28.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

CHAPTER VI.

The Choroti (6). Family Life and Social Organization. Superstition. Illness and Death.

Marriage customs. Division of labour. Chiefs. Medicine men. Belief in evil spirits. Magic means of protection. Illness. Exorcism. Fairy tales. Physical therapeutics. Death. Burial. Belief in a future existence.

A Choroti man, as a rule, has only one wife, but among the part of 595
the tribe that has been in close intercourse with the Chiriguano, it is not an uncommon thing for the chiefs to possess several wives, as, for instance, the chief of the Choroti Indians living in the neighbourhood of Tatarenda (close on the border of the Chiriguano country), who had no less than three spouses. In fig. 178 is seen this chief holding one of his sons by the hand; to the left of the boy there is the chief's »number-one» wife, grown old and ugly, and on the man's right is his second wife, the mother of the boy. His third wife, who is not included in the picture, was quite a young girl.

Among the Choroti it is the women who take the initiative in amor- 832
ous relations. As a rule, this is done at dances which take place in seasons when food is abundant, and the Indians accordingly find it fitting to dance and amuse themselves. In his book »Indianliv», Nordenskiöld has given a very vivid description of such nocturnal mating dances, and in the preceding chapter I have (pp. 149, 150) quoted from him.

When a girl has reached mature age, she enters into free and un- 836
restricted relations with now one, now another, of the men, but finally she finds for herself a partner for life (see fig. 179). Having once taken this step, she usually keeps faithful to her husband. If a Choroti girl should happen to become pregnant, she sets about procuring abortion, and in [847]
that way she as a rule avoids having any children before becoming a

wife. [p. 159]

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

wife. Not infrequently it happens that two or more girls become enamoured of the same man. Then fierce fights are often fought out between the rivals, who in these encounters sometimes use knuckle-dusters or sharp-pointed bone awls (see fig. 111). The Choroti girls have a somewhat peculiar way of demonstrating their tender feelings towards their beloved; they do not kiss him, but scratch him with their nails and spit in his face![1]

When a woman has been taken to wife by the man she has chosen, the latter comes to live in her village, at least for some period of time.[2]

Division of labour as between the sexes among the Choroti.

M = men; W = Women.

Rearing and care of livestock	M[3]	W[3]
Fire kindling, by drilling	M	
Collecting fuel		W
» wild growing, edible plants		W
» wild honey	M[3]	
Hunting and catching game	M	
Preparing the food	M[4]	W
Cultivation of food plants	M	W
Wool and cotton spinning		W
Sewing	M[3]	W[3]
Manufacture of feather ornaments	M	
» » articles of calabash	M	
» » pottery		W
» » articles of leather	M	W[3]
» » fishing nets	M	
» » articles of wood	M	
» » weapons	M	
» » bags, knitted of caraguata yarn		W
» » » » » woollen »		W
Load carrying		W
Hut building	M	W
Weaving		W[3]
Drawing and carrying water		W
Beer brewing	M[5]	W[3]

The heavier burden of work undoubtedly falls to the lot of the women. It is their business to gather edible fruits, to carry home fuel and water, to prepare the food, and, of course, also to tend the children. When the tribe is travelling, it is the women who carry the household furniture and

[1] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 81.
[2] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 83.
[3] According to Nordenskiöld (13), p. 87.
[4] Roasting the food. According to Nordenskiöld (13), p. 87.
[5] Beer fermenting, only. According to Nordenskiöld (13), p. 87.

[Text continues on p. 163]

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco

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and ornaments, wearing many-coloured mantles, necklaces, ear-tubes, big ostrich plumes on the head, and having the face painted. The men form a circle round the girls with arms interlaced round each others' waists. The dance chiefly consists in jumping with both feet at once and stamping hard upon the ground to the measure of a very noisy but monotonous chant. The ceremony is called *níssammaha aséhne*, »to hurry on the girls». The expression »to hurry on» (*níssammaha*), as we shall find later, is used by the Chaco Indians in many cases where there is a question of magically influencing the course of nature for good and useful ends. Just as the Indians believe they can hurry on or promote the growth of the fruit by influencing the tree spirits and by exorcising the evil demons who are trying to blight them, so they »hurry on» the girls in the sense that by the dancing and chanting the latter are prompted to make a definitive choice of a husband, whereas at the same time evil spirits are kept away from them. Courtship and marriage, it should be noted, are of those numerous critical occasions in human life when malignant supernatural powers are believed to be more than otherwise on the alert to do harm and spoil the good designs of men, and as usual the weaker sex is supposed to be particularly exposed to them. The courting dance *Avúshe* is thus in part held with the intention of keeping off this invisible molestation, so that the girl's choice of a consort for life may take place under good auspices.

A man who is not taken away from the dance by a girl has no possibility of getting either a temporary paramour or a wife. The matter wholly depends on the girls, and there are of course always men who for one reason or another are despised. I sometimes noticed such unfortunate lovers at the Choroti dances. Their experience had led them not to take part in the dances; they were sitting in a hut close by, eagerly shaking the rattle gourd (*pelíte*), as they said, »to hurry on the girls» and thus possibly to have better luck in the future. Since the women are much fewer in number than the men, it is necessary that some men are obliged to remain bachelors all their lives. These men were ridiculed not only by the women but also by their more fortunate brethren. On the other hand, there are no unmarried women, and even widows soon remarry unless they are very old.

The men may try to attract the girls at the dances by their beautiful ostrich plumes, necklaces, and other ornaments, but these means of attraction certainly only play a subordinate part. The Choroti woman evidently expects something more of a man whom she thinks of marrying